

Appl. No. 09/907,238  
Amdt. Dated June 9, 2005  
Reply to Office action of March 11, 2005  
Attorney Docket No. P14637-US1  
EUS/J/P/05-3134

### Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 3 wherein one or both of the assigning steps further comprise the steps of:

notifying querying access nodes of the assignment of a particular switch of the switch pool as a handling switch;

waiting [[a]] the time interval; and subsequently

notifying responding access nodes of the assignment of a particular switch of the switch pool as a handling switch.

3. (Currently Amended) In a telecommunications network including a switch pool and a plurality of access nodes served by the switch pool, a method of associating a querying switch with a responsive access node comprising the steps of:

assigning a first switch of the switch pool to be a handling switch for queries received from the plurality of access nodes, wherein each query seeks a response from a particular target access node;

the handling switch directing the queries to the plurality of access nodes of the network for the purpose of eliciting responses from respective target access nodes;

the handling switch receiving query responses from target access nodes;

computing the an average time interval between a query and corresponding response on the network, and using a time greater than or equal to the average time as the waiting time interval and

assigning a subsequent switch of the switch pool as the handling switch and de-assigning the first switch. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of.

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4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 3 further comprising the steps of counting handling switch transactions and assigning a subsequent switch of the switch pool as the handling switch on the basis of the count.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 3 further comprising the steps of monitoring the load level and assigning a subsequent switch of the switch pool as the handling switch on the basis of the load level.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 3 comprising the steps of monitoring the time elapsed since assignment of the handling switch and assigning a subsequent switch of the switch pool as the handling switch on the basis of the elapsed time.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 3 further comprising the step of, after assigning a subsequent switch of the switch pool as the handling switch, forwarding outstanding query responses to the first handling switch.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[8]]~~ 10 wherein the assigning step further comprises the steps of:

notifying querying BSCs of the assignment of a particular MSC of the MSC pool as a handling MSC;

waiting ~~[[a]]~~ the time interval; and subsequently

notifying responding BSCs of the assignment of a particular MSC of the MSC pool as a handling MSC.

10. (Currently Amended) In a Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) network including a Mobile Switching Center pool (MSC pool) and a plurality of

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Base Station Controllers (BSCs) served by the MSC pool, a method of associating a querying MSC with a responding BSC, comprising the steps of:

assigning a first MSC of the MSC pool to be a handling MSC for queries received from the plurality of BSCs, wherein each query seeks a response from a particular BSC;

the handling MSC directing the queries to the BSCs of the network for the purpose of eliciting responses from respective target BSCs; ~~The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of~~

computing the an average time interval between a query and corresponding response on the network, and using a time greater than or equal to the average time as the waiting time interval

the handling MSC receiving query responses from target BSCs; and

assigning a second MSC of the MSC pool as the handling MSC and de-assigning the first MSC

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[8]] 10 further comprising the steps of counting handling MSC transactions and assigning a second MSC of the MSC pool as the handling MSC on the basis of the count.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[8]] 10 further comprising the steps of monitoring the load level and reassigning a different MSC of the MSC pool as the handling MSC on the basis of the load level.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[8]] 10 further comprising the steps of monitoring the time elapsed since assignment of the handling MSC and assigning a second MSC of the MSC pool as the handling MSC on the basis of the elapsed time.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[8]] 10 further comprising the step of, after reassigning a second MSC of the MSC pool as the handling MSC, forwarding outstanding query responses to the first MSC.

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15. (Currently Amended) A telecommunications system comprising:  
a ~~switch~~ Mobile Switching Center pool (MSC pool), said MSC pool further comprising a plurality of individual MSCs ~~switches~~;  
a plurality of access nodes operably coupled to the ~~switch~~ MSC pool; and  
a Routing Function (RF) adapted for associating a querying MSC ~~switch~~ with a responding access node, wherein said RF is adapted for:  
assigning a first MSC of the switch pool to be a handling MSC for queries received from the plurality of access nodes, wherein each query seeks a response from a particular access node;  
the handling MSC directing the queries to the access nodes of the network for the purpose of eliciting responses from respective target access nodes;  
the handling MSC receiving query responses from target access nodes;  
computing an average time interval between a query and corresponding response on the network, and using a time greater than or equal to the average time as the waiting time interval; and  
assigning a second MSC of the MSC pool as the handling MSC and de-  
assigning the first MSC.

16. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15 further comprising a Switch Selection Database (SSDB) operably connected with the RF.

17. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15 further comprising a designated handling MSC ~~switch~~ for receiving and responding to queries received from one or more access nodes.

18. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15 further comprising means for redesignating a different MSC ~~switch~~ of the MSC ~~switch~~ pool as the handling MSC ~~switch~~.

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19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15 further comprising a Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM).